

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior listings of claims:

**Listing of Claims**

1. (Currently Amended) An article system for generating contract documents in a recurring contracting environment, the article comprising a tangible machine-readable storage medium embodying software modules comprising:

contract storage that maintains information relating to a previous contract that has been entered into;

a bid invitation generator associated with a buyer and adapted to convert the information relating to a previous contract into basic bid invitation information, and to provide supplemental bid invitation information in the form of a bid invitation, the supplemental bid information including evaluation rules for scoring each bid;

an interface that provides the bid invitation to one or more designated bidders and receives responsive bids from one or more of the designated bidders;

a bid aggregator configured to automatically score the bids according to a predetermined scoring standard based on the evaluation rules, the predetermined scoring standard assigning a relative importance to a plurality of terms within the bids; and

a contract generator configured to form a new contract based on the information relating to a previous contract and one of the responsive bids.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 1, wherein the contract generator selects the one of the responsive bids from which the new contract is formed.

4. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 3, wherein a highest scoring bidder according to the predetermined scoring standard is selected for the new contract.

5. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 1, wherein further comprising a bid

trigger ~~that~~ causes the bid invitation generator to generate a bid invitation upon the occurrence of the pending expiration of a prior contract.

6. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 1, ~~wherein further comprising~~ a bid trigger ~~that~~ causes the bid invitation generator to generate a bid invitation upon the meeting of a target quantity on a prior contract.

7. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 1, wherein the contract generator forms a portion of the new contract based on previously agreed upon terms between the buyer and a selected bidder.

8. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 1, wherein the contract generator forms a portion of the new contract based on provisions selected by the buyer during performance of a prior contract.

9. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 1, wherein the bid invitation offers a plurality of selectable provisions associated with a contract clause.

10. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 1, wherein the bid aggregator generates a summary of terms from two or more of the responsive bids.

11. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 10, wherein the interface supervises contracting workflow to allow for approval of the new contract.

12. (Canceled).

13. (Currently Amended) The article system of claim 1, wherein the bid invitation is provided in the form of a term sheet.

14. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of generating contracting documents using an automated computing system, comprising:  
receiving, by the automated computing system, a contract renewal indication;

generating, by the automated computing system, a bid invitation in response to the contract renewal indication, the bid invitation including a plurality of offered terms and a plurality of requested terms;

receiving, by the automated computing system, one or more bid responses;

scoring, by the automated computing system, the bid responses according to a predetermined scoring standard, the predetermined scoring standard being generated prior to the bid invitation and assigning a relative importance to a plurality of terms within the bid responses, the bid aggregator normalizing values that are bid for the terms within the bid responses; and

generating, by the automated computing system, a contract by incorporating information from a previous contract and one of the responsive bids.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the contract renewal indication is associated with the expiration of a prior contract.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the contract renewal indication comprises instructions from a user to initiate a new contract.

17. (Canceled).

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, further comprising selecting the one of the responsive bids from which the new contract is formed.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising selecting the highest scoring bidder for the new contract.

20. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising triggering the generation of a bid invitation upon the occurrence of the pending expiration of a prior contract.

21. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising triggering the generation of a bid invitation upon the meeting of a target quantity on a prior contract.

22. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein a portion of the new contract is formed based on previously agreed upon terms between the buyer and a selected bidder.

23. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein a portion of the new contract is formed based on provisions selected by the buyer during performance of a prior contract.

24. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the bid invitation offers a plurality of selectable provisions associated with a contract clause.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, further comprising generating a summary of terms from two or more of the responsive bids.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising supervising contracting workflow to allow for approval of the new contract.

27. (Canceled).

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the bid invitation is provided in the form of a term sheet, the term sheet comprising an abbreviated form of terms in the contract.